

**TESTIMONY OF BRENETTA HENRY FOR THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**AGAINST**

**S.B. 1223 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF A CHILD  
CONVICTED AS DELINQUENT**

**And**

**IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL 6634 AN ACT CONCERNING CHILD WELFARE AND DETENTION IN THE  
JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM AND ERASURE OF JUVENILE RECORDS**

Good afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Brenetta Henry I'm a parent and grandparent of a children who have been referred and involved in the juvenile justice system. I'm here to testify against Senate Bill.1223 which would require parents to pay for the cost of treatment and care for their delinquent child.

I'm a very involved parent in my child's life, in my community and participate in several initiatives in the state to Improve juvenile justice and mental health services for our children in Connecticut. Through my involvement with AFCAMP over the years I've had the opportunity to sit at many tables to bring the voice of many other parents whose voices are not heard. There are so many parents struggling daily with the education, child welfare, mental health and disability system daily to access the services they need in order to successfully raise their children. We lose jobs, housing and many times develop our own mental illness because of the pain and frustration we face daily trying to do the right thing and being blamed for not doing the right thing when you don't know what else to do.

I've been here on many occasions in front of this committee and others pleading with you to insure that the services we need for our children are made available and that systems and provider be held accountable. I was shocked when I saw this bill, because what it says to me is once again parents and the children are being blamed and punished for the problems of systems that not working the way it should. I agree 100% that parents should be involved, but you need to provide them with the information and support for them to be involved in a meaningful way.

There are so many parents in our community trying to do the best they can for their children and are in need of help and support and don't know where to turn. Some have been involved in so many services that haven't worked. This bill will only add an additional burden and stress to them when what they need is help and support to access needed services for their children.

In closing I want to support raised bill 6634 AN ACT CONCERNING CHILD WELFARE AND DETENTION IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM AND ERASURE OF JUVENILE RECORDS. The practice of racial discrimination in the juvenile justice system is and has been an injustice to our Black and Latino families and community and have contribute to many of the problems in our community. This bill will help Connecticut to continue to improve juvenile system by reducing discrimination based on race and ethnicity and stop the cycle to the adult system. This bill will also insure that children are kept in Connecticut rather than being sent out of state. The money saved by bringing back our kids can be invested in Connecticut to develop and implement the services needs for our children. If it can be provided over the border why can't it be provided in Connecticut? I urge you to look closely at these two bills and to do the right thing for Connecticut children at risk or involved in the justice system.